

In addition to the support the Guard and Reserves give to South Dakota, they have also supported overseas operations including those in Central America, the Middle East, Europe, and Asia. The South Dakota Air Guard is currently preparing for its mission later this year, where it will patrol the "No-Fly Zone" in Iraq.

Most South Dakotans know at least one of the 4,500 current members of the South Dakota Guard and Reserves or the thousands of former Guardsmen and Reservists. Sometimes, the connection is even more direct. Before joining the Army, my oldest son was a member of the South Dakota Army Guard in Yankton.

General Killey reported that South Dakota ranks third in the nation in the readiness of its Guard and Reserve units. South Dakota's units are also tops in the nation in the quality of its new recruits. I commend the South Dakota Guard and Reserves for their continued excellence. National rankings only confirm the quality that has come to be expected of the Guard and Reserve of a great state.

However, recruiting and keeping the best of the best in the South Dakota National Guard and Reserves is becoming more of a challenge as our military's operations tempo has remained high while the number of active duty military forces has decreased. This tempo places significant pressure on members of the reserve component and those who employ them as they experience greater training and participation demands. That is why I am joining Senator MIKE DEWINE in introducing targeted tax relief for Guardsmen, Reservists, and those who employ them.

The legislation, called the Reserve Component Tax Assistance Act, will allow Guardsmen and Reservists to claim deductions for travel, meals, and lodging when they travel away from home and remain overnight to attend National Guard and Reserve meetings. A significant portion of the Guard and Reserve in South Dakota must travel at least 40 miles for training and meetings.

The second part of this legislation gives their employers a tax credit when the Reservists and Guardsmen are called up for a contingency operation. Often, these men and women will be gone months in support of overseas military efforts, leaving employers in a difficult position. This year the Air Guard will be deployed to Iraq, and members of the Army National Guard will be deployed to Bosnia next year. Our bipartisan legislation helps to minimize the economic impact by giving a maximum tax credit per employee of \$2000. Each employer would be eligible for a maximum credit of \$7500. This credit will help an estimated 1,100 to 1,300 businesses in our state who employ Guardsmen and Reservists.

Our legislation provides much needed tax relief to Guardsmen and Reservists,

and the employers who support them, and I will continue to do all I can to support our National Guard and Reserves.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### NATIONAL GIRL SCOUT WEEK

• Mrs. CARNAHAN. Mr. President, this week marks the 89th anniversary of the founding of the Girl Scouts of America. What began with a single troop of 12 girls in 1912 has grown into a 3.6 million member organization. Missouri alone has nearly 100,000 members. Over the last 89 years Girl Scouts of America has helped to instill in countless girls strong values, a social conscience, and the conviction of their own potential and self-worth.

Earlier this week, I cosponsored a resolution to designate this week as National Girl Scout Week. I thank my colleagues for unanimously passing that resolution. The Girl Scouts of America has become a national institution. The organization has held a Congressional charter for more than 50 years, and spread to nearly every city in the nation. Girl Scouts learn to be, as the Girl Scout Law says, "considerate, caring, courageous and strong." They develop a strong sense of community responsibility along with a sense of self worth. These girls serve as role models in their communities and become tomorrow's leaders.

Community service is a bedrock principal of the Girl Scouts. Every year, each troop conducts a service project to assist their community. The Girl Scout Council of Greater St. Louis is about to start their annual April Showers project. Every year they collect and distribute personal care items like shampoo, toothbrushes, and diapers to families in need throughout the area. Last year they collected nearly one million items, helping countless families.

On the other side of Missouri, Kara Dorsey, a member of Troop 706 in Warrensburg, recently won her Girl Scout Gold Award for creating a library at the new Warrensburg Veteran's Home. Kara organized two fundraising events then purchased books, tapes and magazine subscriptions with the proceeds. Because of Kara's work, the veterans in Warrensburg have a recreational and educational outlet they might not have had otherwise.

Girl Scouts may be most famous for Thin Mints, Samoas and Tagalongs, but those cookies are more than delicious snacks. Cookie sales teach the scouts about money management, selling skills, and give the girls a chance to give back to their community. Junior Girl Scout Troop 59, in Odessa, Missouri, voted to give a percentage of the money it earned in January to the House of Hope, a shelter for victims of

domestic violence. When someone asked Rachel Kopp, a member of the troop, why they had donated the money, she said, "It was the Girl Scout thing to do." Indeed it is. That is what makes the Girl Scouts so unique. Girl Scouts provide an environment where girls are challenged and guided to become capable, self-reliant, ethical women who make a difference.

On this, their anniversary, I want to thank the Girl Scouts of America for enriching so many young lives, and once again thank my colleges for unanimously calling for the recognition of National Girl Scout Week.●

##### 50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY OF THE REV. AND MRS. BENJAMIN HOOKS

• Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, every day in towns and cities across America, moms and dads, uncles and cousins, gather, in time-honored tradition, to celebrate the milestones of their lives—the births, baptisms, and anniversaries that bind them together and make them one.

Perhaps the most cherished of these is the celebration of marriage because it is marriage, after all, that creates the first and most essential cell of human society—the family.

If they are blessed, Mr. President, these anniversary celebrations of marriage include larger circles of friends and colleagues who recognize not only the value of a special couple's commitment to each other, but also the value of that commitment to all of us as the larger family of God.

On March 24, 2001, in Memphis, Tennessee, Mr. President, such a gathering will occur, and it is in honor of that occasion that I rise today to pay special tribute to a special couple, the Rev. Benjamin Hooks and his bride, Frances, who will celebrate 50 years as husband and wife.

Mr. President, this son of Memphis, is a man whose accomplishments as a pioneer of the civil rights movement, a courageous leader of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and, more recently, as Director of the NAACP are well-known to most Americans. Less known, perhaps, is his work as a public defender, the first African American judge in Tennessee elected since Reconstruction, an outspoken critic of media portrayals of minority stereotypes, and pastor of the Greater Middle Baptist Church in Memphis where I have been honored to worship, and where both Benjamin and Frances have tirelessly dedicated themselves to bringing the goodwill of the family to all society.

But as important as their public work is and has been, it is the private union of these two remarkable human beings that we honor today—their affection and devotion, their deep and lasting commitment and, most of all,